

ROTHBURY
URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT
OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER

FOR THE YEAR ENDING
DECEMBER 31st, 1897.

ALNWICK:

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ROTHBURY, JANUARY 22ND, 1898.

TO THE ROTHBURY URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

GENTLEMEN,

Allow me to present to you this, my second Annual Report. During the year 1897, there were registered 39 births, 13 being males, and 26 females, which (estimating the population at 1,200) is equal to a rate of 32·5. This is better than that for England and Wales, of 30·0, and a great increase upon that of last year of only 20·0. They were registered during the year, during first quarter, 8; second, 15; third, 6; the last, 10.

The deaths, I regret to say, were 23 in number, being 10 more than last year. One of them was a stranger, two were due to the lamentable railway accident, and a third was thrown from his horse and killed. Still, the 22 gives the high rate of 18·33, as against that of last year of 10·8, and last 7 of 15·0; that for England and Wales being 17·0 for country towns. If we were to exclude the accidents, then the rate would be 15·83, very little above the average. Of the 22 deaths, no less than 13 were males, while 9 only were females; and they occurred as follows: During January, 2; February, 4; March, 3; April, 1; May, 1; June, 3; July, 1; August, 1; September, 1; October, 2; November, 1; December, 1. There being 39

births, and 22 deaths, the difference of 17 is the natural increase to the population, which is at a rate of 14·2 (our average being 9·0), and is better than that for England and Wales of 12·0. Of the 39 births, it appears that 5 died while under one year of age, which gives the infantile death rate of 128 per 1,000 born, as against 120 for England and Wales.

In the epidemic (or zymotic) class of diseases, I am happy to say there were no deaths returned, unless that the infant that died of influenza at one month of age may be so classified, which I don't think is so.

The chief causes of death were heart disease, 4; consumption (phthisis), 3; influenza, 1; injuries, 3; bronchitis and pneumonia, 1; other causes, 10 (which include apoplexy, 1; cancer, 1; senile decay, 1; and debility from birth, 1).

The periods of life at which these occurred were: Under one year, 5; fifteen to twenty-five, 1; twenty-five and under sixty-five, 11; sixty-five and upwards, 5 (and of these latter two were over 80, and three others over 70 years of age).

Injuries caused 3 deaths, a female aged 30 was killed in the accident referred to before, on February 13th, and a male, aged 17, was so injured in the same that he died two days afterwards. A male, aged 53, was thrown from his horse and died directly. The Coroner held inquests on these. The stranger was an infant that died at the Workhouse, aged 11 days, of debility.

Influenza occurred at times during the year, chiefly amongst children who were unprotected by previous attacks, and it caused the death of an infant.

Enteric or typhoid fever was imported here on August 13th, by a young woman who came from London. Seven days after she became ill, and returned home on August 28th. She stayed in Addycomb Cottages. Here the privy and ash middens were cleaned out and disinfected, no further cases occurring.

Erysipelas occurred in an adult male, living in Addycomb Cottages, on March 1st. He recovered after a protracted illness. No further cases occurred, and there was nothing unsanitary.

Chicken pox broke out in a mild form in February.

Measles occurred in two outbreaks; the first on April 7th, when only one was affected; the second in July and August, when seven in all were affected. In the first case there was no ash midden, which has been since provided. In the other, a cowkeeper was cautioned to keep all workers away from the infection. This outbreak was imported from Bedlington. Isolation and disinfection were ordered to be carried out.

Scarlet fever did not occur at all during the year.

I inspected the lodging house at times, it being always clean; also the slaughter houses at intervals. They were mostly tidy, but one owner was feeding a pig on the offal, which caused the sty and manure midden to be most offensive. Your Board wisely decided not to allow this nuisance to recur there or elsewhere in the future.

Ashes are rarely now deposited at the waterside, &c. The depot has been greatly improved in appearance, and proper rules laid down for depositing thereon. At the request of the Board, I inspected a foul heap of refuse and road scrapings at the Workhouse. This was removed. The foul nuisance, caused by keeping a pig in Henderson's Old Property at Bridge End, has been rectified. An offensive accumulation in Providence Lane was also removed, and the same in Bridge Street.

I would again strongly urge the Board to adopt the Notification of Infectious Diseases Act, so far as small pox, scarlet fever, diphtheria, membranous croup, typhoid, continued and puerperal fevers, erysipelas, and cholera are concerned. (Now adopted.)

The agitation on the east coast to acquire Tosson Springs has been revived, but your interests will be protected.

Your Inspector (Mr. Bell) has furnished me with the following list of conditions, &c., attended to by him, besides the above, during the year:—Two curtilages have had their drainage renewed, and two others partly so; five imperfect gullies have been replaced; two ashpits provided to premises previous without such; eight privies built or re-constructed; and eight ashpits the same.

The above have affected nine different premises, to obtain which improvements only five legal notices have been served. Twenty-seven visits have been paid to slaughter houses and their adjoining conveniences. On twenty-two visits all was correct, the other five occasions necessitating the serving of four informal notices, and one legal one, to correct irregularities. Eight legal notices have been served to abate common nuisances, and twenty informal notices for the same. No complaints have been made of smells from street gullies or sewer outlets during the year; and no stoppages have occurred in the public sewer. With one exception there has been no deposit of refuse in unauthorised places.

Plans for the erection of seven dwelling houses have been examined and passed, and also for additions to three premises.

I am indebted to Mr. Bertram of Cragside, for the following table of rainfall during the year 1897.

MONTH.		INCHES.
January	3'59
February	1'55
March	4'87
April	2'23
May	1'21
June	2'53
July	2'42
August	2'36
September	3'86
October	1'86
November	2'91
December	2'69
Total		32'08 Inches.

This is less than our average of 34'0 inches. The number of wet days was 190; and the hours of bright sunshine 1,405.

Your obedient servant,

F. BARROW,

Medical Officer of Health.